

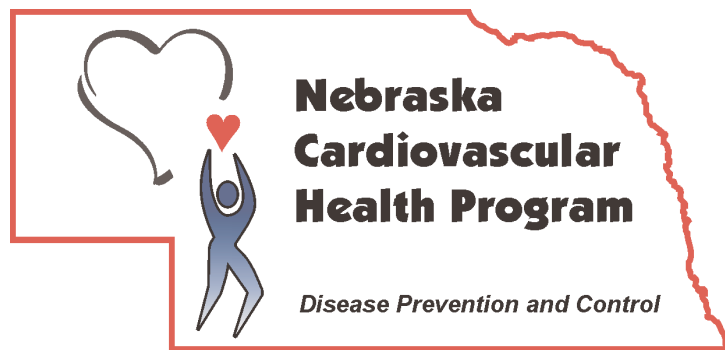


## How to Organize a Successful Educational Luncheon and Style Show

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM



Cardiovascular Health Program and the Office of Women's Health



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## *The National Campaign*

*The Heart Truth* is a national campaign designed to increase awareness among women about their risk of heart disease. The campaign is sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in partnership with: The American Heart Association; Office on Women's Health, DHHS; WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease; and other groups committed to the health and well-being of women.

### *The Heart Truth Message*

Only about one-third of women know that heart disease is their biggest health threat, and most fail to make the connection between its risk factors—such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol—and their personal risk of developing heart disease. *The Heart Truth* campaign is designed to raise awareness that women need to protect their hearts.

*The Heart Truth* features a Red Dress as the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness. This symbol links a woman's focus on her "outer self" to the need to also focus on her "inner self" and her heart. What's a Red Dress got to do with it? A simple Red Dress works as a visual red alert to get the message heard loud and clear: "Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear. It's the #1 Killer of Women."

This national campaign is reaching women with important heart health messages in community settings through a diverse network of national and grassroots partner organizations.

### **The Nebraska Connection**

The Nebraska Health and Human Service System (HHSS) is partnering in the national *Heart Truth* campaign through the Cardiovascular Health Program and the Office of Women's Health. National campaign materials have been tagged with state information and are being distributed free or at very low cost through these programs. Project personnel are available to assist local health departments and other organizations to help spread the campaign messages to women throughout Nebraska. This handbook is part of those statewide support efforts.



Educational materials were attractively packaged and distributed to salons.



Representatives from two local Red Hat Societies attended the Hastings festivities and served as models.



Left to right: Judy Schrock, wife of Senator Edward Schrock, District 38, poses for the camera with Dr. Pradipta Chaudhuri, keynote speaker and cardiologist with the Nebraska Heart Institute in Hastings, and Bonnie Burling, wife of Senator Carroll Burling, District 33.

## Overview of the Hastings Event

*The Heart Truth* Luncheon and Red Dress Style Show that served as the model for this publication was held on October 20, 2003 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Hastings. Produced through a collaborative effort of sponsors in a four-county region in central Nebraska (Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster), the event was attended by over 100 women. The purpose was to promote awareness about women and heart disease and to recruit area beauty salons to join the campaign as outreach sites in this important public health education effort. It used many of the materials developed by the National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute, which is coordinating the national *Heart Truth* public education campaign.

### Local Sponsors and Partners

Area sponsors providing funding support for the event were:

- Brodstone Memorial Hospital/Superior Family Medical Center
- Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital
- Midlands Cardiology Group
- Nebraska Heart Institute
- South Heartland District Health Department
- Webster County Community Hospital

Partnering organizations giving materials and other in-kind contributions were:

- American Heart Association of Nebraska
- Bristol-Meyers Squibb Medical Imaging
- Clay County Health Department
- Nebraska Health and Human Services System: Cardiovascular Health Program and the Office of Women's Health

### Area Business Involvement

In addition to the area sponsors and partnering organizations, 42 businesses and organizations donated items for door prizes, contributed educational materials/supplies or gave discounts, provided clothing for the Style Show, styled models' hair, etc.



## Invited Guests

Eighty-eight beauty salons in the four-county region were contacted and invited to the event. Twenty-three women representing fourteen beauty salons attended. Thirty-two area residents served as models and also attended the luncheon as guests. Additional special guests included:

- Christine Peterson, Policy Secretary of the Nebraska HHSS
- Bonnie Burling, wife of Senator Carroll Burling (District 33)
- Judy Schrock, wife of Senator Edward Schrock (District 38)

## Event

A Red Dress Style Show kicked off the event featuring 35 red outfits and two tuxedos from twelve area businesses. A total of thirty women and two men served as models. Four representatives from two area Red Hat Society chapters also modeled their festive attire. Kelly Glorioso of KHAS-TV was emcee for the Style Show.

The fashion show was followed by a heart healthy meal consisting of a salad sampler (made with low-fat dressings), fresh fruit and a low-fat muffin. Dr. Pradipta Chaudhuri of the Nebraska Heart Institute in Hastings was the keynote speaker and gave a Power Point presentation about women and heart disease.

Several of the sponsors and partnering organizations distributed heart health educational materials at display tables prior to and after the Luncheon and Style Show. In addition, *Heart Truth* fact sheets were placed at each table setting along with a program.

At the end of the event, countertop display racks of educational materials were distributed to representatives of each of the beauty salons. Call back information was included in the displays to assist in restocking the educational materials as needed.



Theresa Anderson, Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital, Kathy Ward, Office of Women's Health, and Dixie Zoucha, South Heartland District Health Department are thrilled with the turnout.



Judy Mikkelson and Nancy Hofts, Superior, and Kathy Smith and Judy Schrock, Holdrege, pose for pictures after attending *The Heart Truth* event in Hastings.



A model displays one of the more than 30 outfits that were featured in the style show.

## Media Coverage

Two local TV stations: KHAS-TV in Hastings and NTV in the Kearney area attended the event and broadcast evening news stories. A Hastings Tribune reporter and photographer attended and gave the event good coverage in the local section of the newspaper. During the week of the event, team leader Dixie Zoucha appeared on noon talk shows on KHAS-TV and NTV to talk about *The Heart Truth* campaign. Kari Majors, Community Health Educator with the Cardiovascular Health Program at Nebraska HHSS, appeared on the noon talk show that week on KOLN/KGIN-TV in Lincoln. Follow-up stories, photos of the attendees, and “thank you” ads appeared in local weekly papers in the area, further promoting awareness of the campaign.

## Outreach

As a follow-up, educational displays were distributed to the salons in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties that were unable to attend the event. (Note: A week later, a report was received of a woman who picked up *The Heart Truth* materials at a beauty salon in the area, recognized she was experiencing some of the signs and symptoms and went to see her doctor. She reportedly had a stress test that indicated a blockage.)

Dixie Zoucha reports that the event proved an excellent way to get the new local health department out into the public eye and seen as an active force in community health education. She also reports community interest in holding a similar event in the future.



Educational exhibits provided additional opportunities to reach participants with life-saving information.



## Work Plan - Sample

Activity	When it needs to be done
Form coalition/work group	At least 16 weeks prior
Solicit involvement of sponsors, partners, businesses	At least 14 weeks prior
Determine date, time, place	At least 12 weeks prior
Determine prospect businesses to approach for clothing and door prizes	
Request salon mailing list from HHSS	
Solicit fashions and door prizes from businesses	At least 8 weeks prior
Recruit speaker, style show announcer, emcee	
Determine menu	
Design invitations	
Order educational materials for handouts and displays	
Mail invitations	4 weeks prior
Distribute PSA's and posters	
Recruit educational exhibitors	3 weeks prior
RSVPs due – (Follow-up calls to those who didn't RSVP)	2 weeks prior to event
Design program	



## Work Plan - Sample (continued)

Activity	When it needs to be done
Provide draft script to style show announcer Check with speaker on equipment needs/confirm Compile door prize list Print program Assemble salon displays Confirm details with facility – give final meal count Fax media alerts	Week before event
Update the style show script with last-minute changes	Day before event
Run the event	Day of event
Send thank you cards Place thank you ad Distribute remaining salon displays	1-2 weeks after event

## *Tips for a Successful Event*

### **Forming a Community Coalition**

The Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties *Heart Truth* Coalition was formed specifically to organize *The Heart Truth* special event. The coalition was composed of one or two representatives from each county. Each of these representatives then recruited several additional helpers. Each representative was responsible for encouraging participation from sponsors, partners, salons and businesses in their own county.

Whether you create a similar coalition or not, the key to a successful event is to have sufficient volunteers, start early (at least 4 months in advance of the event), have consistent and well-organized planning meetings, and DELEGATE responsibilities to trustworthy participants.

Choose a team leader who can motivate, energize, and support others but is comfortable delegating and keeping others focused on tasks and deadlines. If you delegate tasks according to team member strengths, they will be happier workers and you will have a more successful event.

If you are a relatively new organization, or unknown to many community members, holding an event like this one is a great way to increase your visibility. Recognize, however, that an important element in the success of any event is relationship-building in the community. Organizations that are not well-known may have difficulty drawing large participation the first year because credibility and trust must first be earned. Don't set your goals too high, but consider it an opportunity to increase public awareness of your mission and goals.



## Involving Sponsors and Partners

Use an introductory letter and follow-up with a phone call. (Sample included on CD ROM)

Look to involve:

- ✓ other surrounding health departments
- ✓ hospitals
- ✓ cardiac specialty facilities/clinics
- ✓ non-profit/public health organizations
- ✓ local businesses
- ✓ representatives who can attend organizational meetings (PR department personnel from hospitals and other health organizations might be good choices.)

Total cash outlay for the Hastings event was about \$1750 (for food, facilities/equipment, decorations, supplies and thank you ads run after the event in all the local papers).

In-kind donations can be expected to cover:

- ✓ Staff and volunteer time
- ✓ In-house printing
- ✓ Telephone calls
- ✓ Educational materials
- ✓ Door prizes



### *Tips for Success*

- Arrange a system for handling cash donations and disbursements.
- Get sponsors/partners to sign on as early as possible so they can be recognized in all materials.
- Get the proper spelling/pronunciation of sponsor's name and contact information.
- Get a phone number and email address for the contact person.
- Send out invoices for committed donations.
- Recognize door prize donors by posting names on a sign at the door, including on the program or insert, and labeling the prize at each table.

## Choosing the Date, Time and Place

Pick a date that makes sense given other competing events and priorities in your local community. Many salons are closed on Mondays, so that might be a logical choice. In Hastings, doors opened at 11am to allow viewing of the educational exhibits and the event ran from 11:30am-1pm to give sufficient time for all of the activities.

In a facility, look for:

- ✓ an accessible location that has some “style”
- ✓ staff members who have conducted similar events in the past
- ✓ food offerings that include low-fat choices
- ✓ a runway (or adequate floor room) and sound system (background music can enhance the atmosphere)
- ✓ staff members that are flexible, communicate well, and are efficient
- ✓ a room for models to dress
- ✓ sufficient space for educational exhibits



### *Tips for Success*

- Select a low fat menu option.
- Communicate often with the staff (never assume something will be done without asking for it).
- Arrive at least three hours ahead of time to set up.
- Provide a full-length mirror for the model's dressing room, water to drink and non-messy refreshments
- Invite local well-known women who can help bring media attention to the event. Addresses for your local elected officials can be found on the Internet.

The Hastings event was scheduled with the style show first, then food was served, and then the speaker began. This allowed the models to join the luncheon to eat and hear the presentation.





## Invitations

### *Tips for Success*

- Prior to mailing formal invitations, make sure salon owners receive an introductory letter or visit, to help build a trusting relationship and explain the purpose of the event. It's best if the initial contact is made in person, so questions about the event could be addressed face to face. (Sample introductory letter included on CD ROM)
- Dignitaries invited to the event should receive an introductory letter along with their invitation. (Sample introductory letter included on CD ROM)
- Create a stylish invitation that provides all the critical information. (Samples of invitations included in Desktop section) Hastings event organizers developed one invitation for salons and another for dignitaries.
- Obtain a mailing list for your local salons from the Nebraska HHSS Regulation and Licensure Department.
- Set an RSVP date at least 2 weeks before the event; give one reliable RSVP phone number; collect name, salon, and phone number when RSVPs are called in.
- Make call-backs to confirm RSVPs 1-2 weeks before the event.

Note: The Hastings event coordinators had difficulty determining an accurate count for the luncheon because some people either forgot to RSVP, or reserved a place and then did not attend. One way to solve this would be to require a check to be submitted to reserve a place, which could be returned when the guest arrived. This might, however, dissuade salon representatives who know little about the luncheon sponsors. Another option would be to invoice those organizations or individuals who did RSVP, but failed to attend. If this method is employed, RSVP callers would need to be informed of the billing intent and mailing addresses would need to be obtained.

## Soliciting Door Prizes

Non-clothing retailers in the community can contribute to the event through the donation of door prizes or other items. Discounts or donations of the materials required to make the educational displays for the salons might be obtained through local office supply or gift stores. Some salons may choose to provide assistance with models' hair and makeup as well as participating as invited guests.

For door prizes, consider:

- ✓ candles (also double as great centerpieces)
- ✓ pedometers
- ✓ other healthy lifestyle tools



### *Tips for Success*

- Visit the store in-person if possible. A phone call is fine if you know the manager.
- Provide a solicitation letter at first contact, as needed. (Sample included on CD ROM)
- When receiving a donation, you may wish to send a thank you note. Provide a written receipt for the merchandise donated if requested.
- Obtain accurate store information for proper crediting.
- Crediting stores in a "Thank You" advertisement can be a good incentive to spur donations and offer an opportunity to further publicize the campaign. (Sample included in Media section)

## Recruiting Clothing/Models

Businesses who loan red clothes for the style show need to provide a one paragraph description of the clothing. It is highly recommended that the business also provide the model, who can bring the clothing to the event and return it once the show is over.



### *Tips for Success*

- Provide an introductory letter at first contact. (Sample included on CD ROM)
- Identify a reliable person at the store who will be your consistent contact.
- Obtain the descriptions of the clothing at least 2 weeks before the event.
- Agree on who will pick up and return the clothes.
- Get a name and contact information for the model. Instruct her/him to arrive an hour before the doors open to practice on the day of the event.
- Invite the model to stay for the meal as your guest.
- Make a reminder phone call to the business the week before the event and double-check that all information remains the same.
- Create both a model list and style show script. (Samples included on CD ROM)



## Event Emcee

In Hastings, a coalition member served as the event emcee: welcoming the audience, recognizing special guests, introducing the style show announcer and the educational speaker, and giving closing remarks. (Samples included on CD ROM)

Look for:

- ✓ someone who will write her/his own remarks (which helps when there are last minute changes)
- ✓ is comfortable speaking in public
- ✓ has a relaxed, friendly demeanor

### *Tips for Success*

- Get the correct name pronunciations and organizational affiliations for all the invited guests.
- Get the correct name pronunciations and appropriate introductory information for the style show announcer and educational speaker.
- Encourage the emcee to keep all comments brief.

## Style Show Announcer

Look for:

- ✓ a local TV news personality (the media connection is an added plus for publicity)
- ✓ someone with experience doing style shows
- ✓ someone who will be flexible when there are changes



### *Tips for Success*

- Contact by phone or in-person to recruit. Provide her/him with *Heart Truth* background materials.
- Send a confirmation letter when she/he accepts.
- Ask how she/he would like the script prepared (font size, pages numbered, etc.).
- Supply a draft script a few days before the event.
- Provide an updated version of the script the day of the event. (Sample included on CD ROM)
- Offer a small gift like a red corsage or boutonniere.

## Educational Speaker

Look for:

- ✓ a cardiologist or some other health professional considered credible on the topic of women and heart disease
- ✓ someone well-liked in the community
- ✓ someone who can be counted on to appear
- ✓ someone who is articulate and comfortable speaking in public



### *Tips for Success*

- Prepare the speaker ahead of time by providing information about what *The Heart Truth* campaign is all about. (The [www.hearttruth.org](http://www.hearttruth.org) website is a good resource.)
- Share audience expectations so the topic is presented at a level the audience can understand.
- A Speaker's kit has been developed by the national *Heart Truth* campaign. A Power Point presentation is one of the components. To obtain a state-specific version of the PPT, contact [officeofwomenshealth@hss.state.ne.us](mailto:officeofwomenshealth@hss.state.ne.us). The Speaker's kit also includes a short video and speaker's notes.
- If you have difficulty recruiting a speaker, contact the Nebraska Office of Women's Health, [officeofwomenshealth@hss.state.ne.us](mailto:officeofwomenshealth@hss.state.ne.us), which is coordinating a statewide speaker's bureau as part of the local *Heart Truth* campaign.
- Find out if the speaker will require any presentation equipment and if she/he will provide it. (Power Point Presentations require a laptop, projector and screen.)
- Request that the speaker arrive at least 20 minutes before the scheduled presentation. More time will be needed if presentation equipment is used.
- Get adequate information about the speaker to develop a short but strong introduction.
- Contact the speaker the day before the event to remind him/her.
- Assign a volunteer to meet her/him at the door and help prepare for the presentation.
- Offer a small gift like a red corsage or boutonniere. (*Heart Truth* pins are available through the national *Heart Truth* website or at some Walmart locations for under \$2.)



## Educational Materials and Displays

To insure that each attendee receives key educational information, we suggest placement of the following educational materials (available through the national *Heart Truth* campaign, [www.hearttruth.org](http://www.hearttruth.org) or [officeofwomenshealth@hhss.state.ne.us](mailto:officeofwomenshealth@hhss.state.ne.us)) at each table setting:

- When Delicious Meets Nutritious: Recipes for Heart Health
- *The Heart Truth* For Women: If You Have Heart Disease

A style show program may also be placed at each table setting to provide a schedule for the event and credit the sponsors, partners and donors. (Sample included in Desktop section)

At the end of the luncheon, each salon should be given a small countertop display of educational materials to distribute to their clients.

To create, purchase:

- ✓ sturdy small mail holders or other divided holders suitable for countertop placement (The Hastings group used one ordered through Walmart for under \$2.)
- ✓ cello bags and ribbons as wrapping material (The Hastings group ordered bags decorated with hearts through a local Hallmark store.)

Suggested educational materials to include in the displays:

- What's your Risk? Questions to Ask Your Doctor (Information Sheet from The Healthy Heart Handbook for Women, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute)
- General Screenings & Immunizations Guidelines for Women (Information Sheet from the Office of Women's Health-Nebraska Health & Human Services System)
- Nurturing Women's Hearts (Bookmark from the American Heart Association)
- Simple Solutions (Brochure from the American Heart Association)
- What Every Woman Needs to Know About Good Nutrition and Health (Brochure from the Nebraska Wheat Board)



### *Tips for Success*

- Request *Heart Truth* labels from Nebraska HHSS to place on displays.
- Allow plenty of time to assemble the display packets.
- Include a card instructing salons how to get refills for the displays. (Sample included in Desktop section)
- Set up a quarterly system to reconnect with the salons to get feedback, hear any success stories, and re-stock materials.

Depending on the room available at the facility, health organizations that sponsor or partner in the event may be able to set up educational tabletop exhibits that can be visited by attendees before or after the event. Additional handouts or giveaways can be provided by the sponsors and distributed at these exhibits.



## Promotion and Publicity

It's important to determine what you want to result from your media coverage. If your event is open to the public and you want to increase attendance, then publicizing the upcoming luncheon is a good idea and could start about six weeks prior to the event. If the luncheon is not a public event, then focus initial media attention on *The Heart Truth* educational messages. Use the luncheon as a media focus ONLY on the day of the event and after it occurs.

To promote *The Heart Truth* message (locally tagged or developed materials are available through Nebraska HHSS, contact: [officeofwomenshealth@hhss.state.ne.us](mailto:officeofwomenshealth@hhss.state.ne.us)):

- ✓ Radio and television *Heart Truth* PSA's are available for distribution to local media. Ask your media which format would be best.
- ✓ Newspaper clip ads can be sent as hard copy or via email.
- ✓ Posters are available via PDF or hard copy.



## Tips for Success

### To increase attendance before the event:

- Place notice of date, time, place in media event calendars.
- Submit a pre-release to newspapers or ask them to do a story. (Sample included in Media section)
- Put up posters at sites most likely to be frequented by your target audience.

### Coverage of the event:

- Fax media alert or send email invitations to the media you want to attend a few days before and again the morning of the event. (Sample included on CD ROM)
- Prepare press packets to give out at the event. Include a fact sheet about *The Heart Truth* campaign, a pre-written release about the event as though it has already happened, and a list of interview contacts the media could access for interviews at or after the event. (Samples included on CD ROM)
- Assign a volunteer to meet with each media person who arrives, give them a press packet and make sure they can access what and who they need.
- Keep track of which media attend.
- Take lots of pictures at your event, especially of attendees from small towns with weekly news papers. Try for small group shots of women from the same communities. If you have dignitaries who attend, take photos of them with other community members.
- Take a photo of all the coalition members for publicity and keepsake purposes.

### Post-event publicity:

- Send your pre-written release with any general pictures of the event to any major media outlets you invited but who didn't attend.
- Submit the pictures of locals who attended along with identifying captions and a general release about the event to weekly newspapers in the days after the event. (Sample included in Media section)



## Running the Event

Several tasks have to occur simultaneously on the day of the event. Be sure these tasks are delegated to coalition members or other helpers.

These include:

- ✓ Directing the set up of exhibits/displays
- ✓ Running the check-in table
- ✓ Coordinating the models
- ✓ Meeting the style show announcer and educational speaker
- ✓ Greeting and assisting the press
- ✓ Handing out the door prizes
- ✓ Distributing the salon educational displays



### *Tips for Success*

- Provide a master list of area salons to check-in table volunteers with salons that RSVP'd highlighted and the number attending from each salon noted
- Have two stations (at either end of the check-in table) equipped with sign in sheets and pens for guests that provide a place to note salon or other affiliation (these can be compared to the master list after the event)
- Provide pre-printed name tags for those with RSVPs (include affiliation) and organize them alphabetically on the on the check-in table
- Provide blank name tags and pens for those who failed to RSVP
- Use a master list of area salons when distributing the educational displays; highlight those salons that receive a display to make follow-up easier

## After the Event

Successful organizers know that the work isn't over when the luncheon ends. Good follow-through will help your group build credibility in the community and be better prepared for future special events.



### *Tips for Success*

- Assure all clothing is returned to appropriate businesses.
- Send hand-written thank you letters to your speaker, emcee and sponsor contacts, as needed.
- Send thank you letters to all business donors (or credit in advertising).
- Place thank you ads in all the newspaper thanking sponsors and partners. (Sample provided in Media section)
- Distribute remaining salon displays in person.
- Create a system to re-connect with the salons to obtain feedback and re-stock educational materials. (2-4 times per year)
- Hold a “de-briefing” with your coalition/volunteers and write up a list of “Things to Do Differently Next Time.”
- Compile all your digital documents in a file and all paper copies and photos in a scrapbook to make future event coordination easier.